

IKE SKELTON  
4TH DISTRICT, MISSOURI

2206 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-2504  
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-2876  
website: [www.house.gov/skelton](http://www.house.gov/skelton)

514-B N.W. SEVEN HIGHWAY  
BLUE SPRINGS, MO 64014-2733  
(816) 228-4242

1401 SOUTHWEST BLVD., SUITE 101  
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65109-2429  
(573) 635-3499

219 NORTH ADAMS STREET  
LEBANON, MO 65536-3000  
(417) 532-7964

908 THOMPSON BLVD.  
SEDALIA, MO 65301-4593  
(660) 826-2675

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2504**  
**January 27, 2004**

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The Missouri River and the proper management thereof remains an important issue for the citizens of Missouri and for the overall economic well-being of the Show-Me State. I encourage you to give immediate attention to the negative consequences that are developing as a result of the Administration's plans for managing the river.

The Missouri River flows through the northern reaches of the Fourth Congressional District, whose residents I have the privilege of representing in the U.S. House of Representatives. Having been born in the river town of Lexington in Lafayette County, the Missouri River has played an important role in my life. Generations of men and women who have lived along the river share my respect for the Missouri River's contributions to our history, our heritage, and our economy.

Citizens in Missouri continue to be concerned about the impact of proposed water flow changes on farming, barge navigation, other agribusiness, and power generation, in addition to the impact on wildlife habitat. Over the past several years, the Missouri River basin has experienced extremely dry weather and water levels have not been as high as we would like to maintain normal water flow. Combining the current dry spell with the low summer flows that have been advocated by the Administration is a recipe for disaster. In fact, barge companies are already folding-up shop because river reliability has been completely voided.

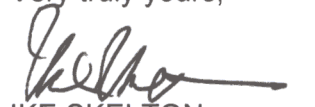
This turn of events is undoubtedly harmful to Missouri. Without barges to move fertilizer and commodities up and down the river, transportation costs for Missouri's farmers will dramatically rise during this growing season. Additionally, low water levels and high summer water temperatures will hinder electricity generation at power plants located along the river and will interrupt commerce on the Mississippi River. These low flows also threaten to end a way of life that has been a part of Missouri's heritage.

None of these outcomes can be taken lightly, and I ask you to immediately examine the Administration's plans for Missouri River management. Anything short of a common-sense solution that keeps summer flows at a level adequate to maintain barge traffic, to run our electric companies, and to preserve economic benefits to Missouri's farmers is not an option you should consider implementing.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future explaining how the Administration plans to rectify this situation on behalf of Missourians.

Sincerely,

Very truly yours,

  
IKE SKELTON  
Member of Congress